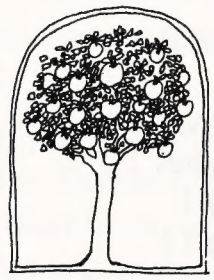
# Learn to play the tin whistle

With
ARMAGH PIPERS CLUB

Part 3

30p



# LEARN TO PLAY THE TIN-WHISTLE

Music Transcriptions Eithne Vallely

Introduction John B. Vallely

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## CONTENTS


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Introduction | 1 |
| | **Jigs** | |
| 1 | The Pipe on the Hob | 2 |
| 2 | Brian O'Linn | 2 |
| 3 | The Rolling Waves 1 | 3 |
| 4 | The Rolling Waves 11 | 3 |
| 5 | Tom Billy's Jig 1 | 4 |
| 6 | Tom Billy's Jig 11 | 4 |
| 7 | The Foxchase | 5 |
| 8 | A Chailleach do Mharais Me | 5 |
| 9 | The Gold Ring | 6 |
| | **Slip Jigs** | |
| 10 | The Humours of Derrykrosane | 7 |
| 11 | The Choice Wife | 7 |
| | **Reels** | |
| 12 | The Humours of Carrigaholt | 8 |
| 13 | Caher Rua | 8 |
| 14 | Speed the Plough | 9 |
| 15 | The Boy in the Gap | 9 |
| 16 | Trim the Velvet | 10 |
| 17 | Dan Breen's Reel | 10 |
| 18 | The Musical Priest | 11 |
| 19 | McFadden's Handsome Daughter | 11 |
| 20 | Within a Mile of Dublin | 12 |
| 21 | Colonel Frazer | 12 |
| 22 | O'Dowd's Reel | 13 |
| 23 | The Gravel Walk | 13 |
| | **Set Dances Clan Marches, and O'Carolan Tunes** | |
| 24 | The King of Laois | 14 |
| 25 | Lord Mayo | 14 |
| 26 | Planxty Irwin | 15 |
| 27 | O'Rourke's Noble Feast | 15 |
| 28 | The Eagle's Whistle | 16 |
| 29 | A Fine Toast to Hewlett | 16 |
| 30 | The Ace and Deuce of Piping | 17 |

## INTRODUCTION

All traditional musicians, if asked when or how they learned to play, will invariably reply that they never really received any formal musical training, rather they grew up with the music from the cradle. To people in search of encouragement, this reply has the effect of dashing their hopes of ever grasping the elusive traditional style. It should be said straightaway that this reply is the stock-in-trade of all traditional musicians, and what it simply means is that they have spent a long time absorbing the sounds of the music, and that therefore, the expression of the music through whatever instrument they play is completely intuitive.

What the learner should realize very early in his apprenticeship is that, apart from learning the technicalities, he should spend a long time training his ear by listening to as much good playing as possible.

This third book is almost completely based on the playing of great players from Donegal, Clare, Kerry, Limerick, and Dublin. The tunes themselves can nearly all be found on records produced by Gael-Linn, Topic, and Claddagh. We hope that these unusual tunes and unusual versions will stimulate learners to go to the original for further inspiration.

Irish music is not the cut and dried, dead-pan thing that piano-accordians and ceili bands often make it - it is full of surprises and excitement, and above all, it is the living expression of the oldest musical tradition in Western Europe.

Listen to the playing of Willie Clancy, Seamus Ennis, Johnny Doherty, Paddy Taylor, John Kelly, and Denis Murphy, to mention only a few of the greats, and you will quickly realize the importance of listening to the music as against just reading it.

## THE STRUCTURE OF IRISH MUSIC

The structure of Irish music is derived from that of early Gregorian Chant. i.e. it is based on Modes and not on Major & Minor scales. The basic scale does correspond with the Major scale - doh, ray, me, fah, soh, la, ti, doh. A new scale was then built on each of these notes - the Ray mode is ray, me, fah, soh, la, ti, doh, ray, etc. The Doh mode (Ionian mode) is the most common and over two-thirds of the tunes in these books are in the Doh mode. Examples of tunes in the Ray mode (Dorian mode) are:-

**Part 1** Nos. 3, 12, 18 (b), 22, & 28 (b).

**Part 2** Nos. 9, 20 (b) & (c), 22 & 29.

**Part 3** Nos. 2, 6, 23, 25 & 30.

Examples of tunes in the Soh mode (Mixolydian mode) are:-

**Part 1** Nos. 4 & 17.

**Part 2** Nos. 4 & 7.

Examples of tunes in the Lah mode (Aeolian mode) are:-

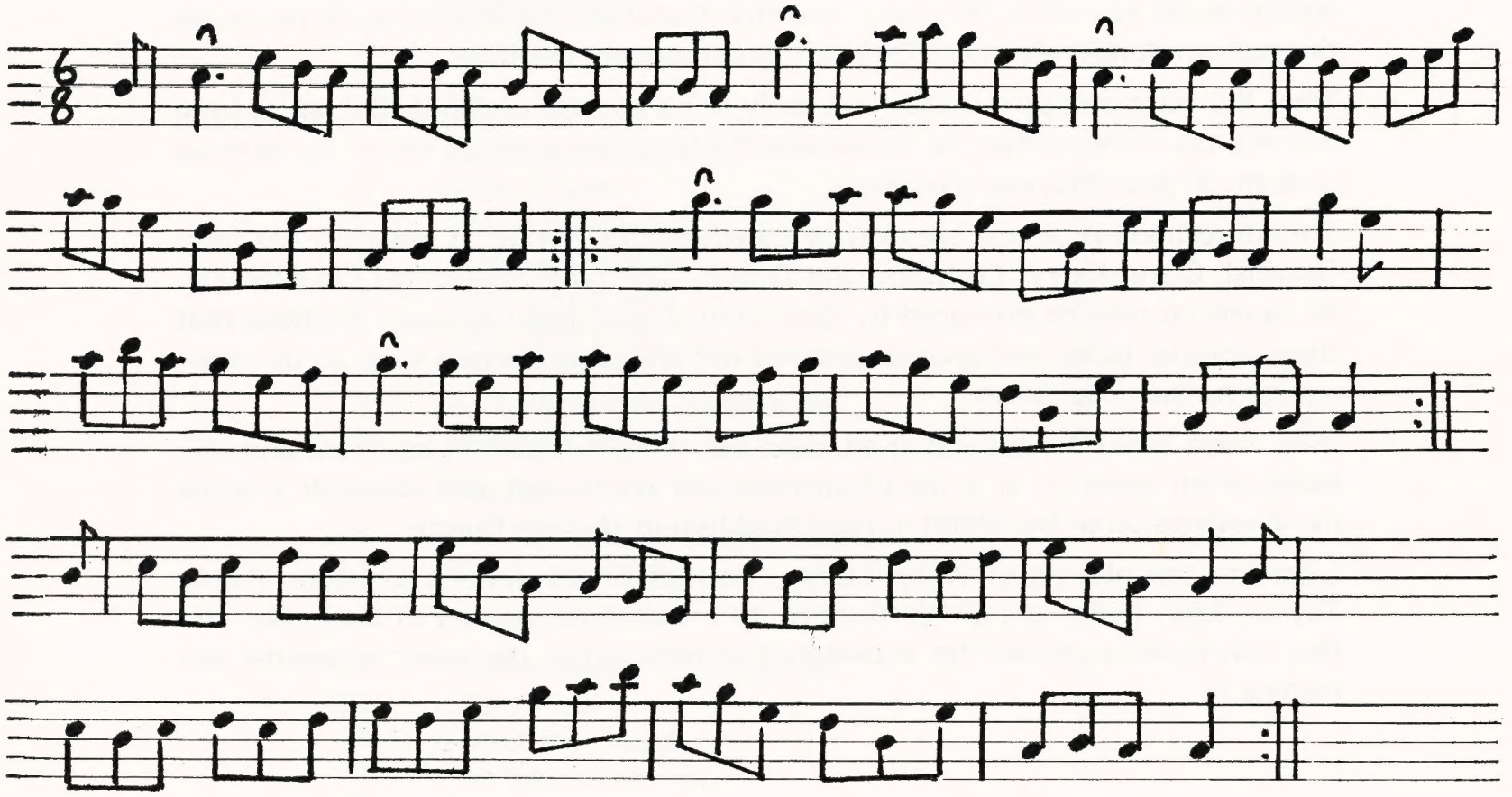
**Part 1** Nos. 8, 9 & 16.

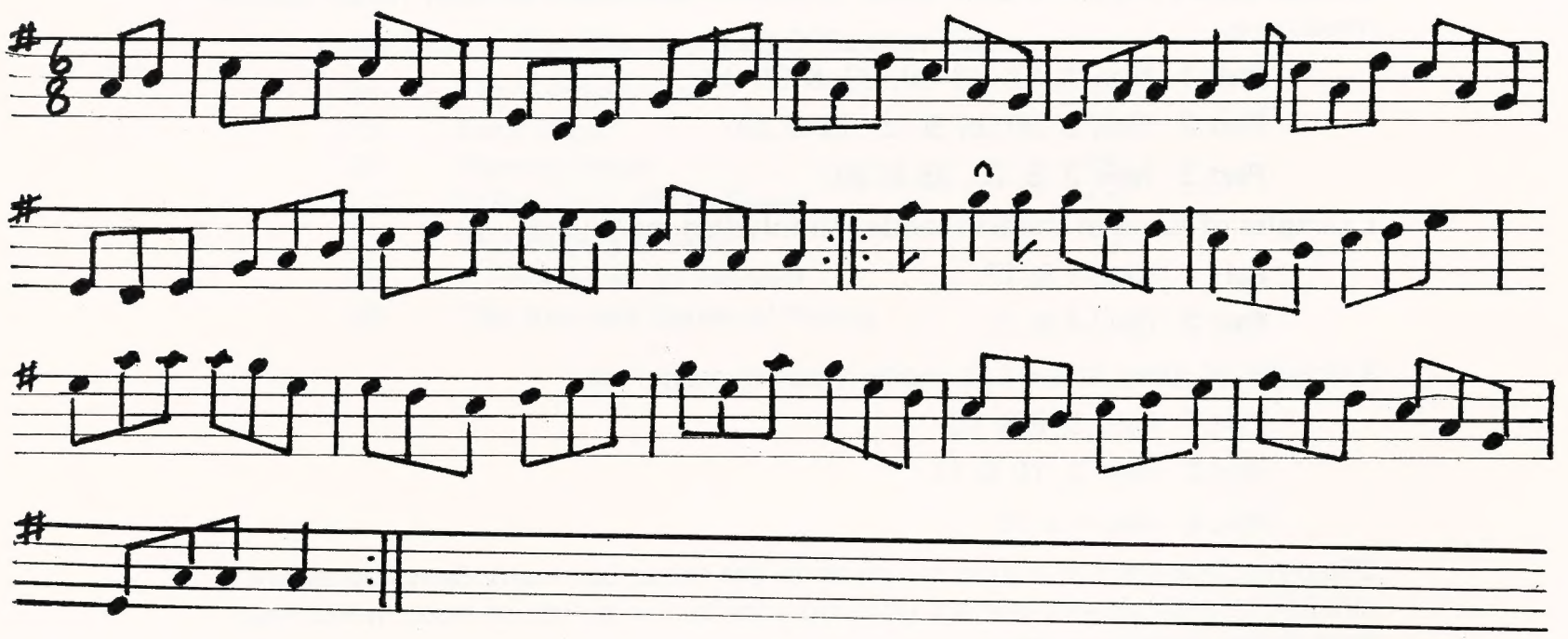
**Part 2** Nos. 2, 10 & 11.

**Part 3** Nos 1 & 18.

Often the final note of a tune is a guide to the mode but many dance tunes are circular i.e. they do not end on a closing note but on a note or notes which lead back to the beginning again.

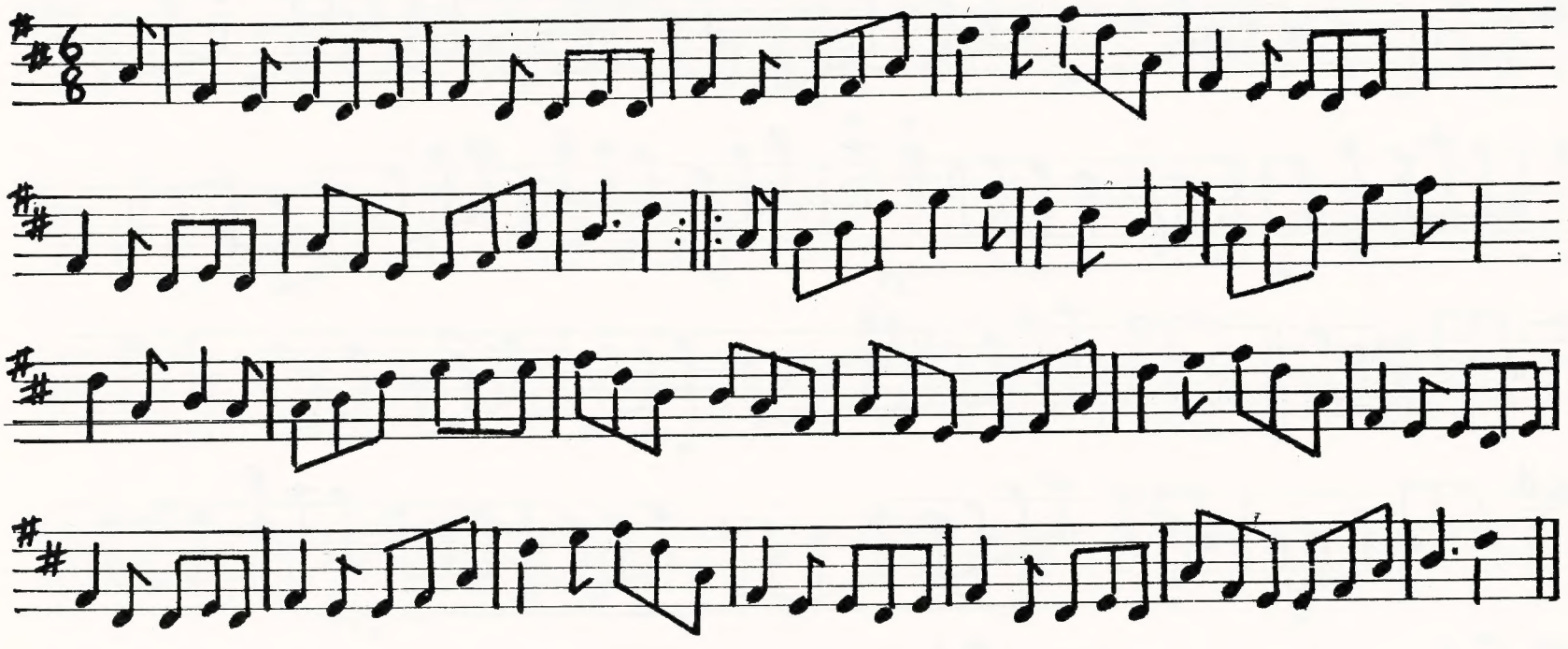
# JIGS

## Pipe on the Hob 1

## Brian O'Linn 2

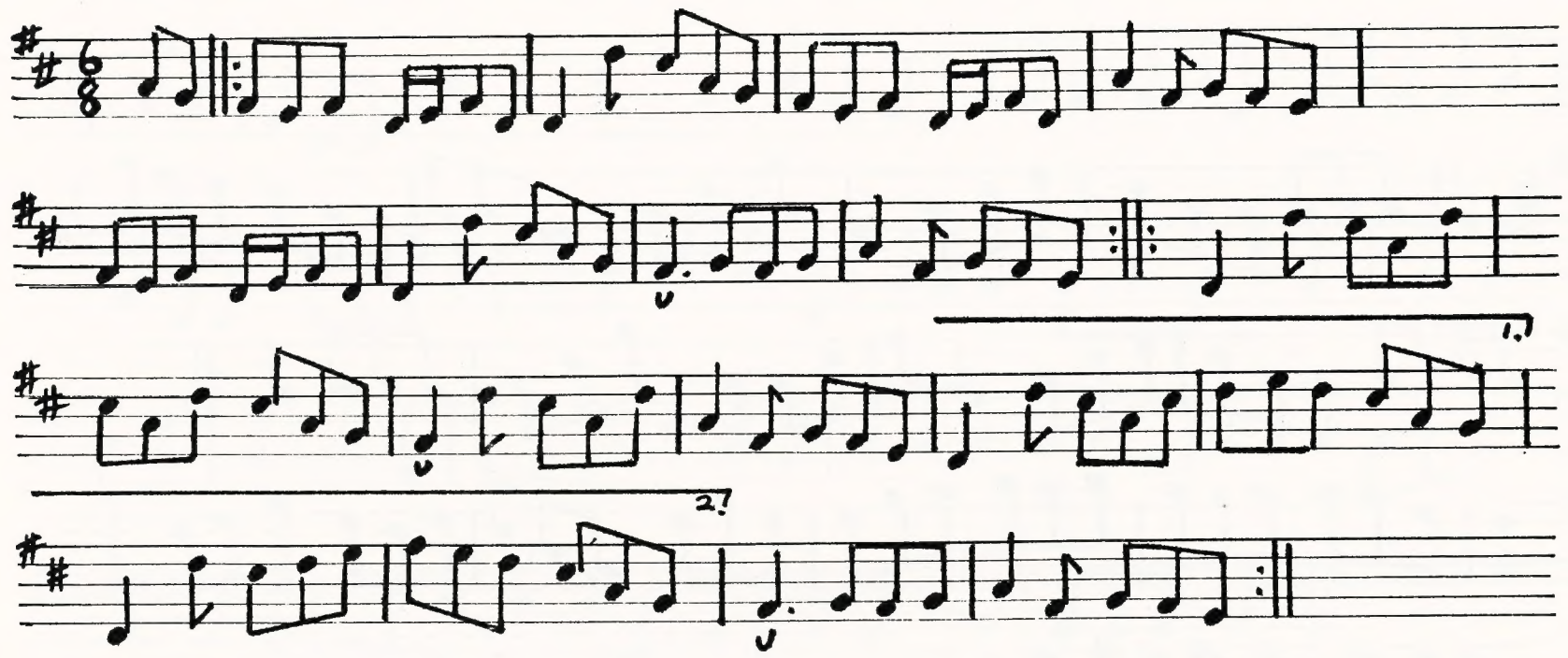


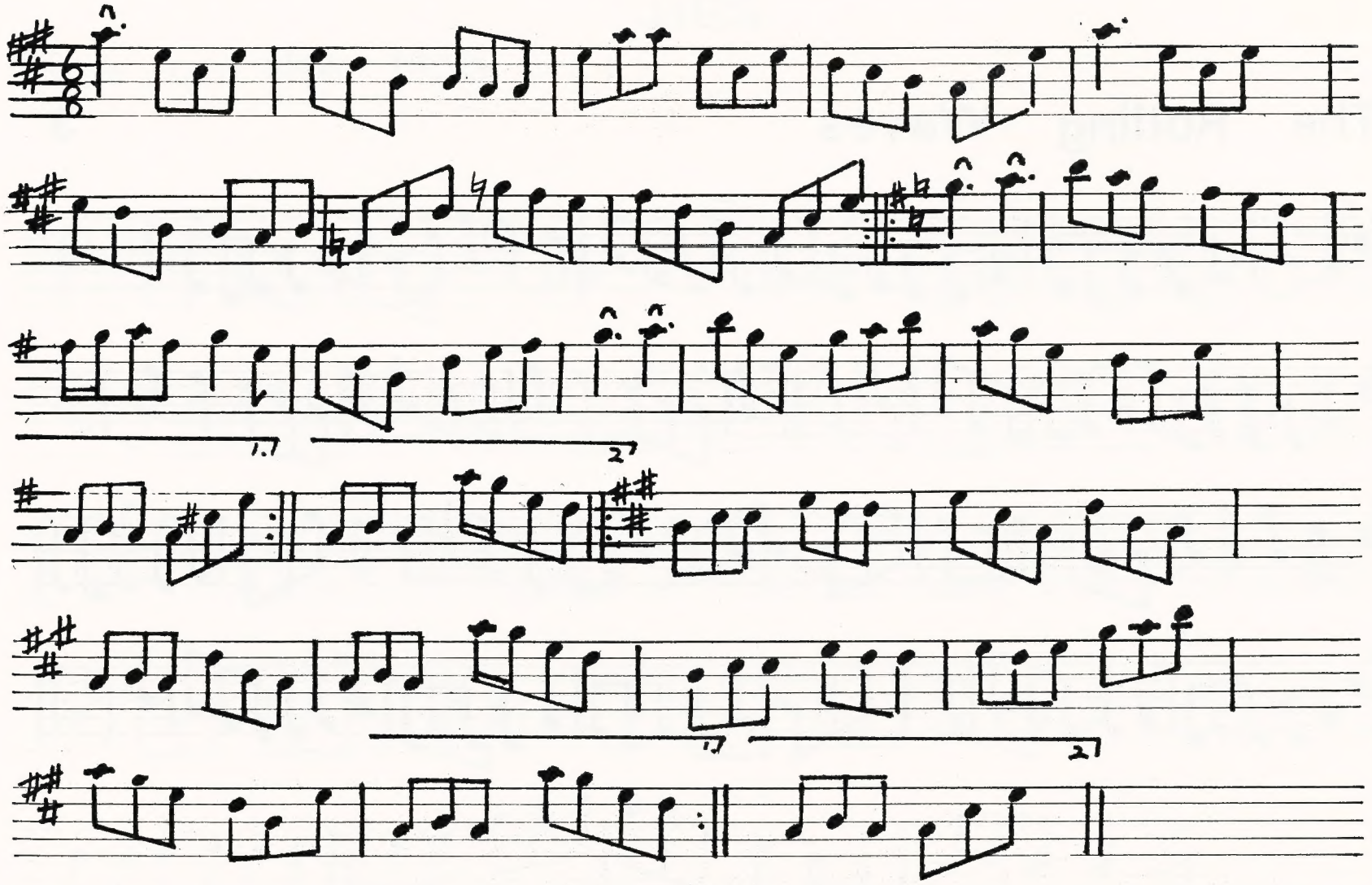
## The Rolling Waves









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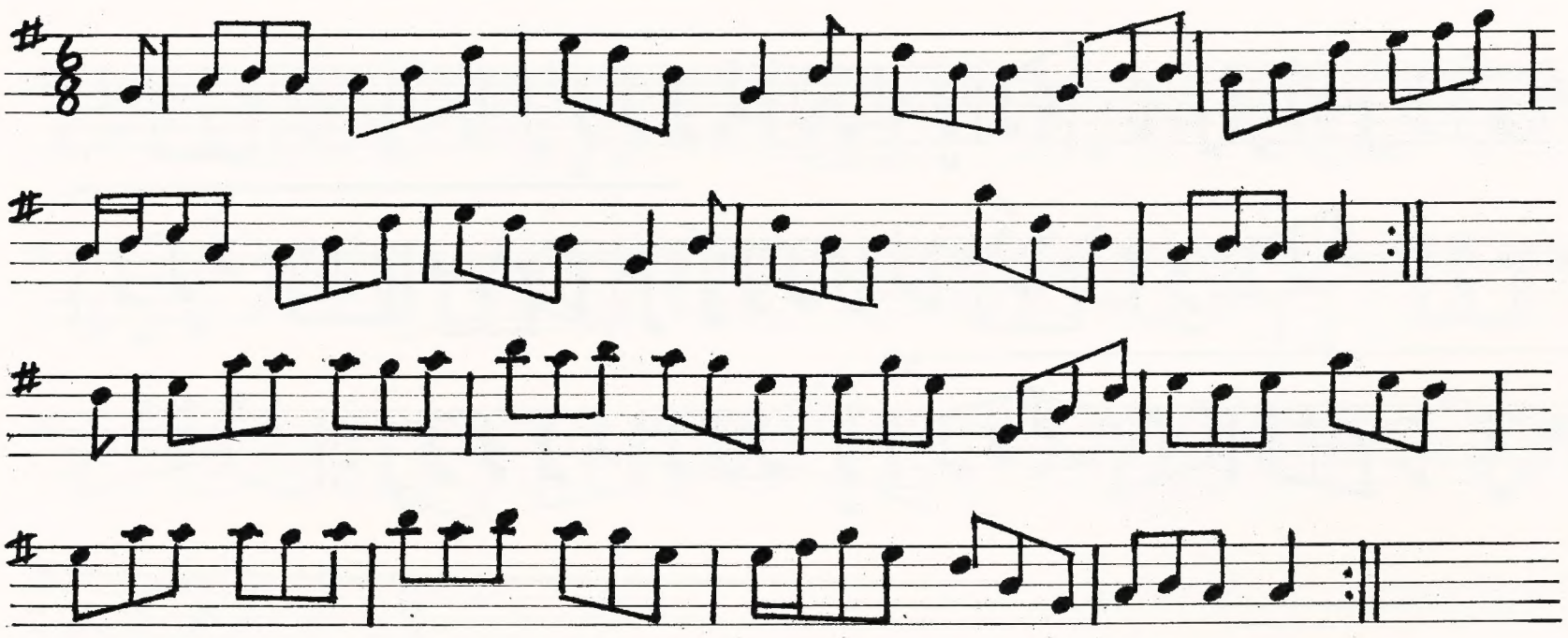
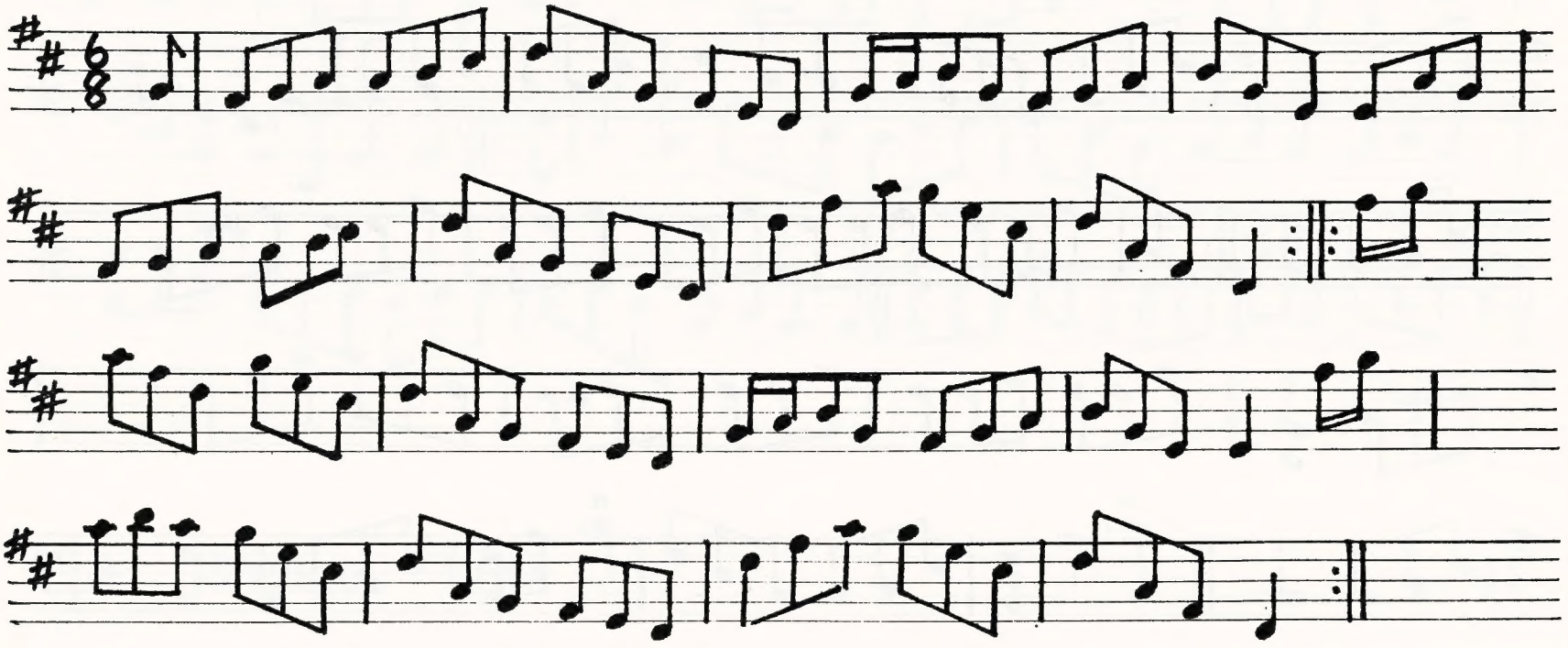
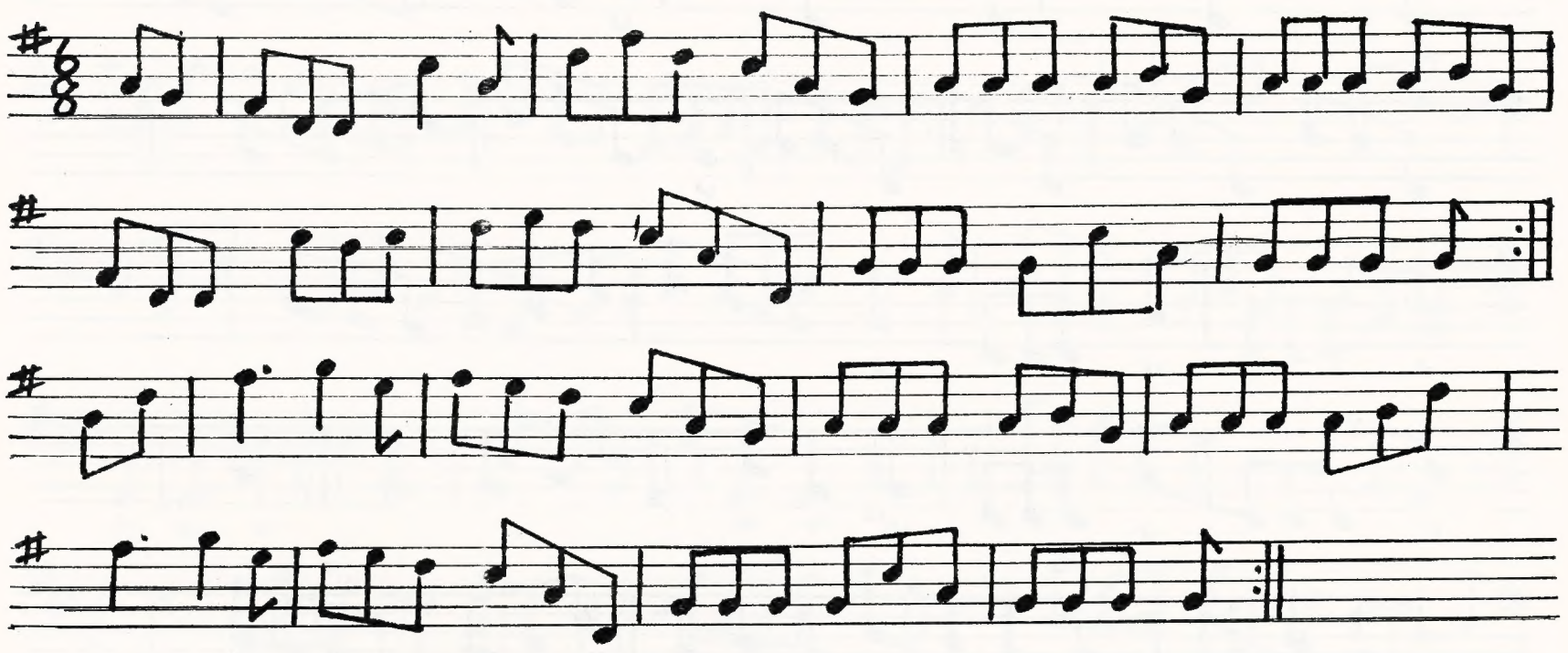
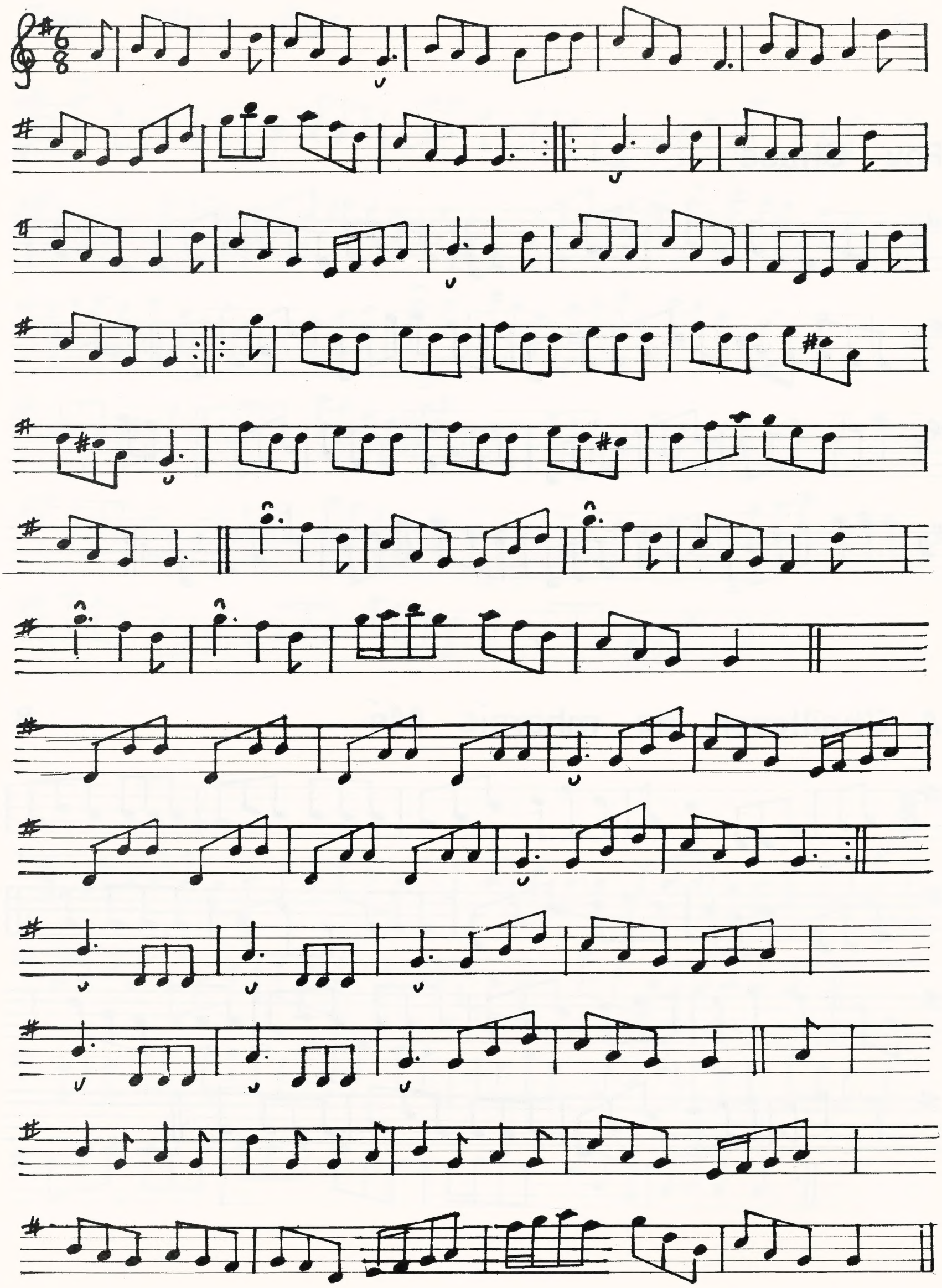
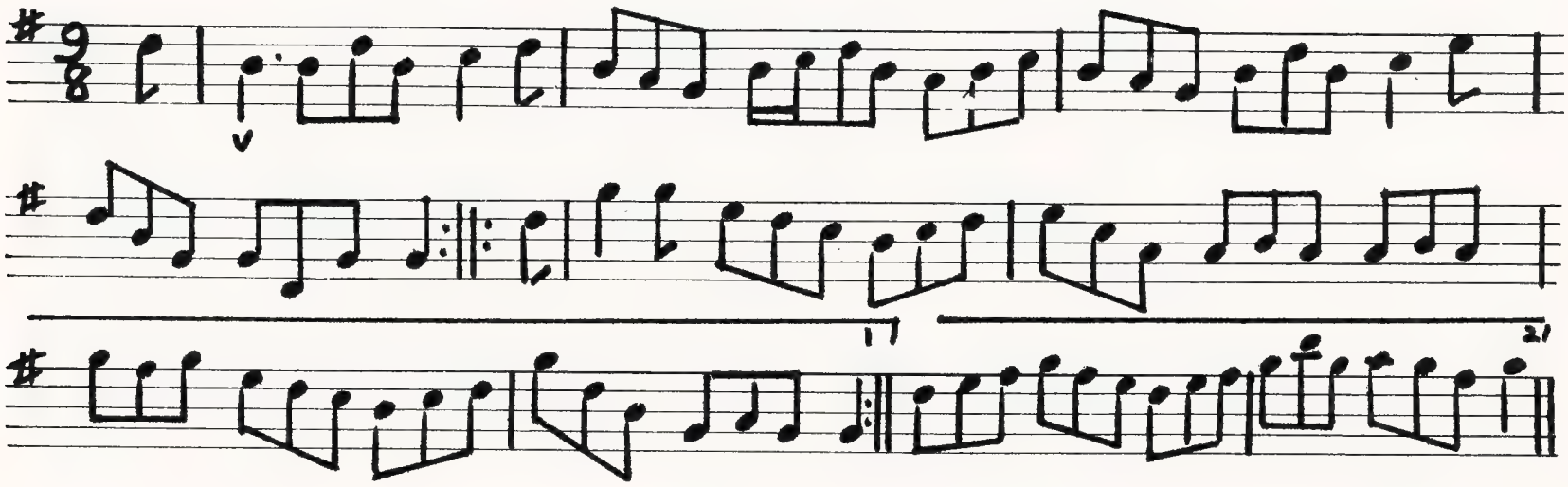
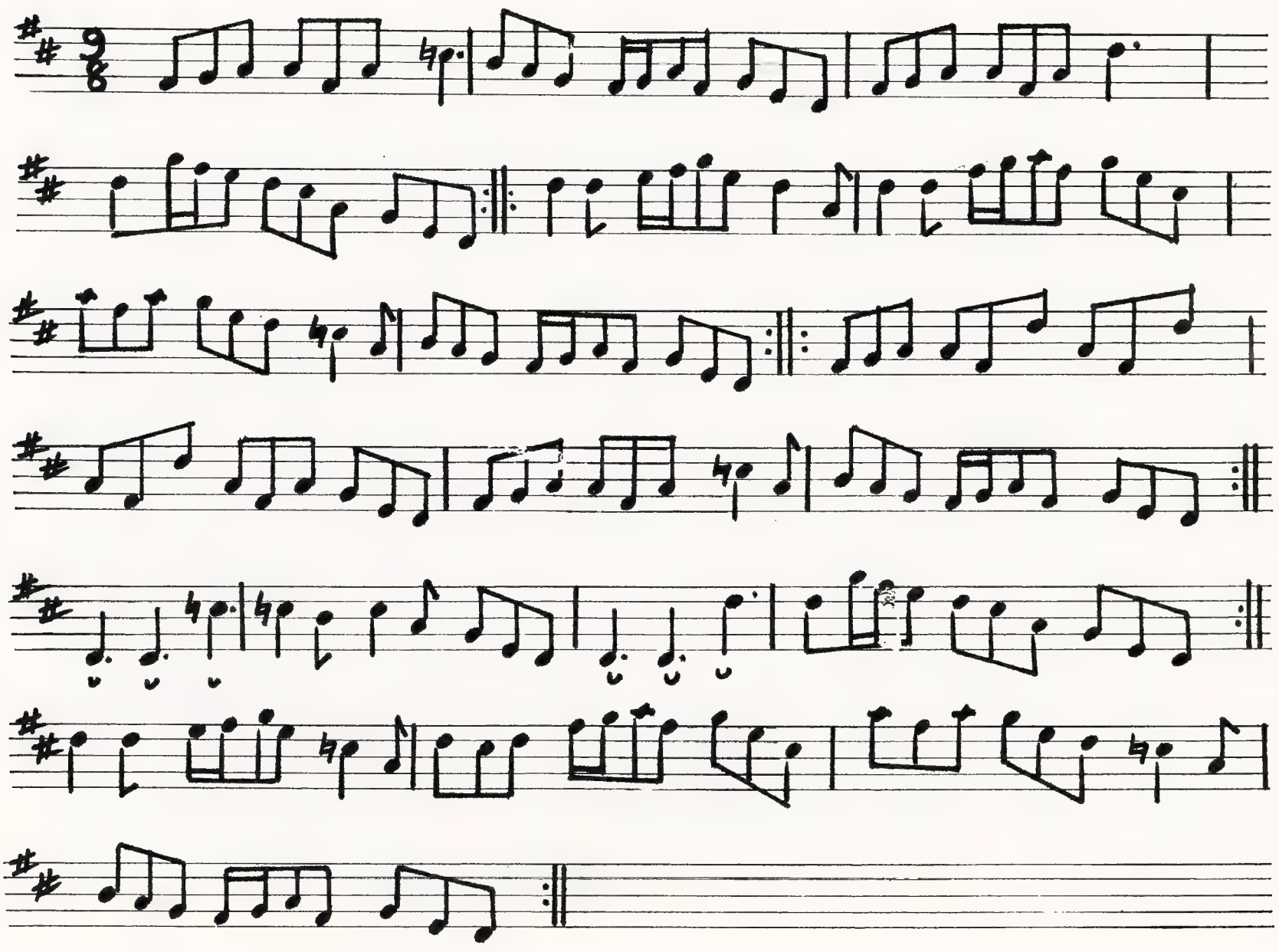
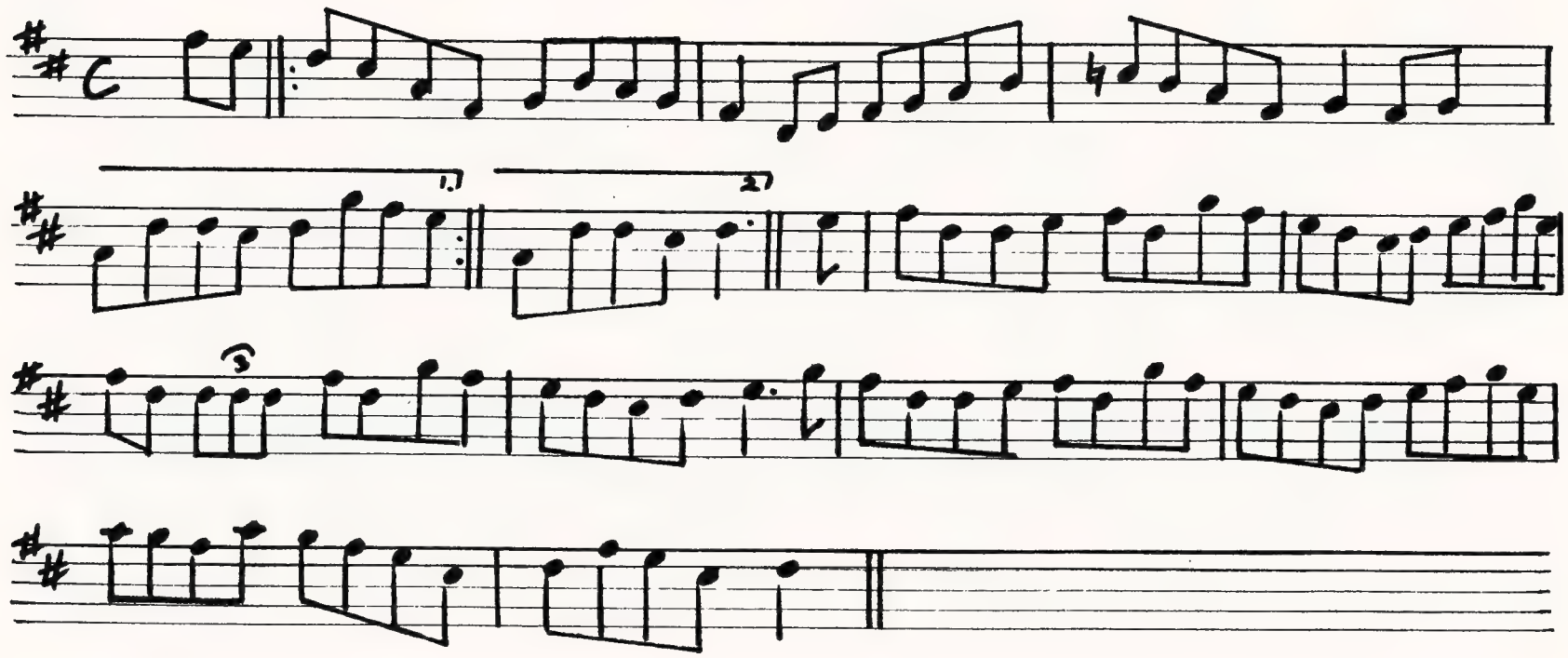
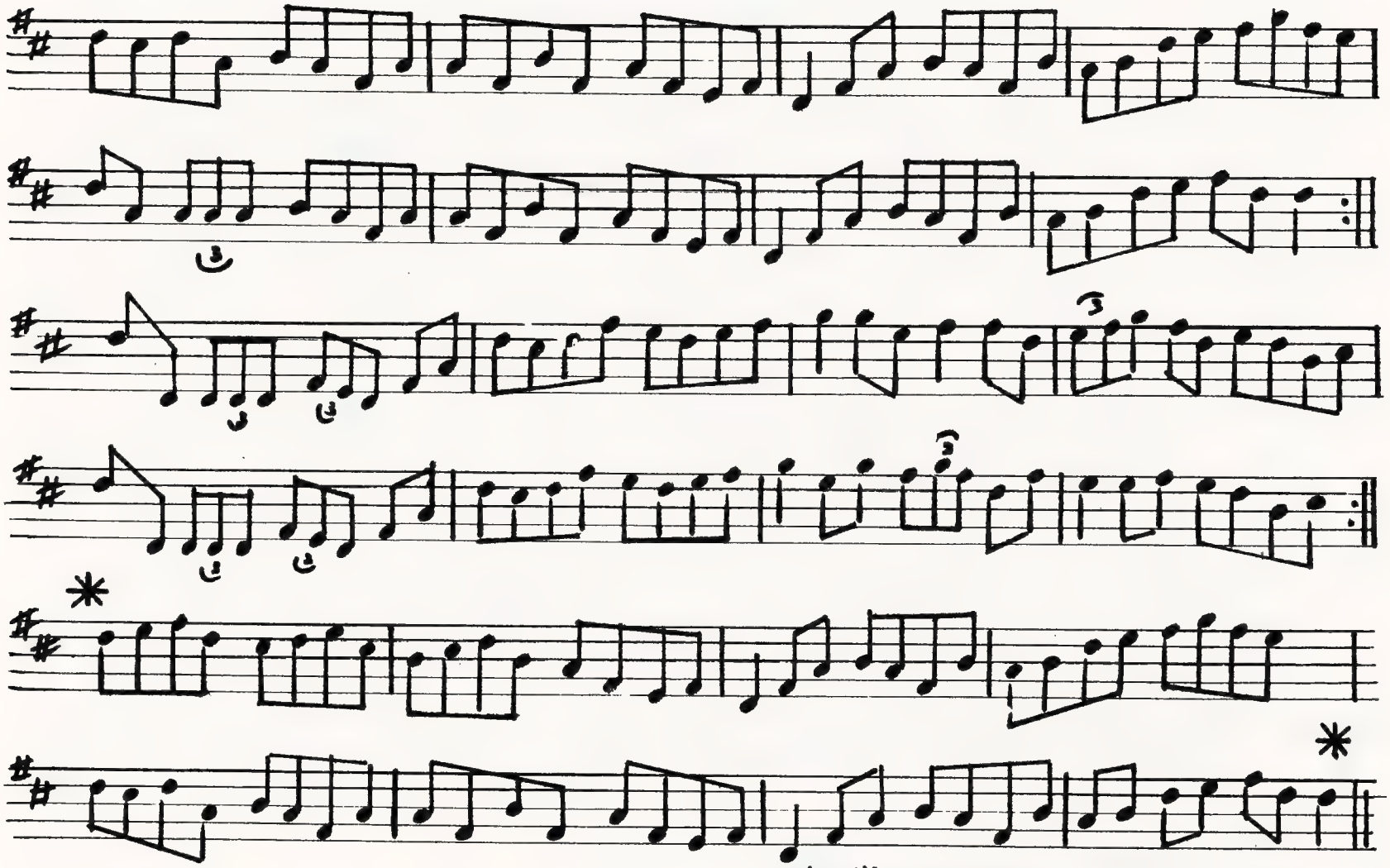

## Fox Chase 7

## A Chailleach , do mharaís Mé 8



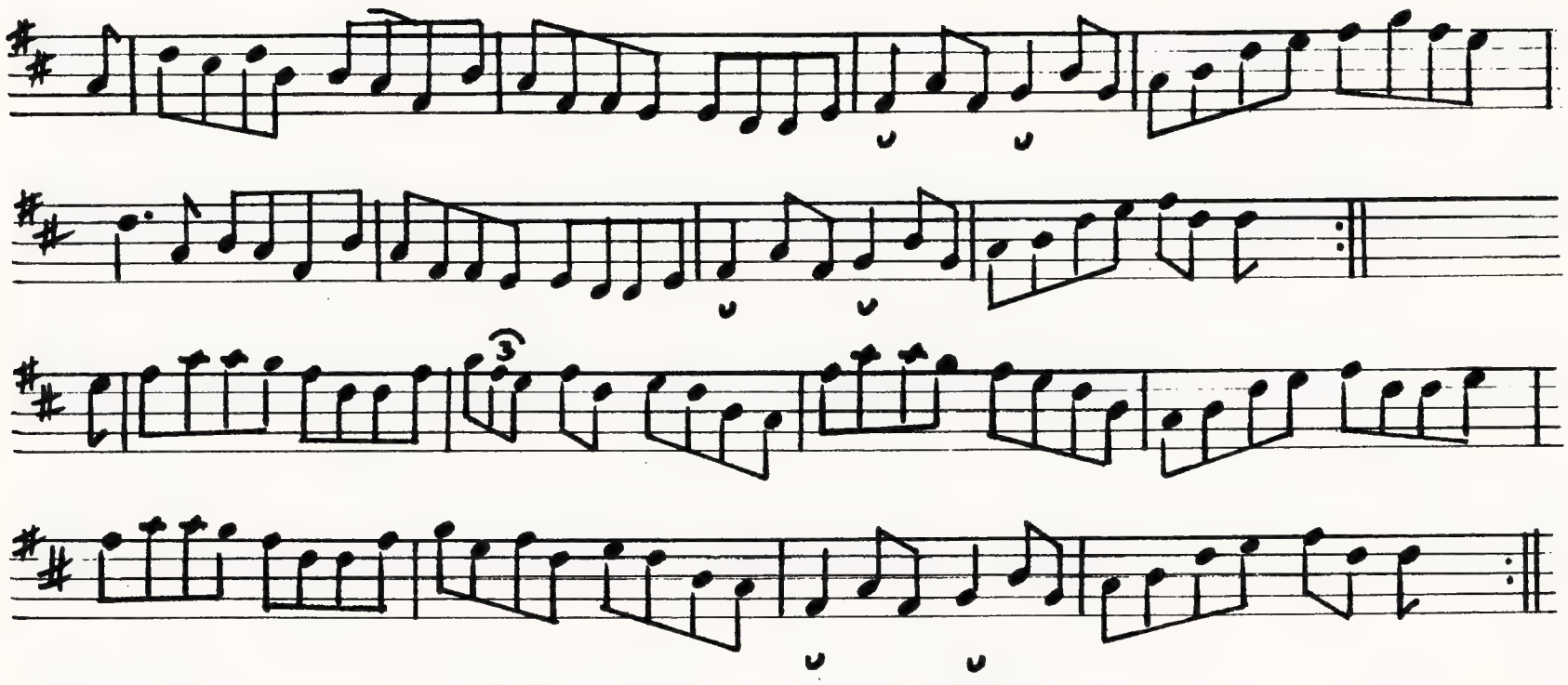
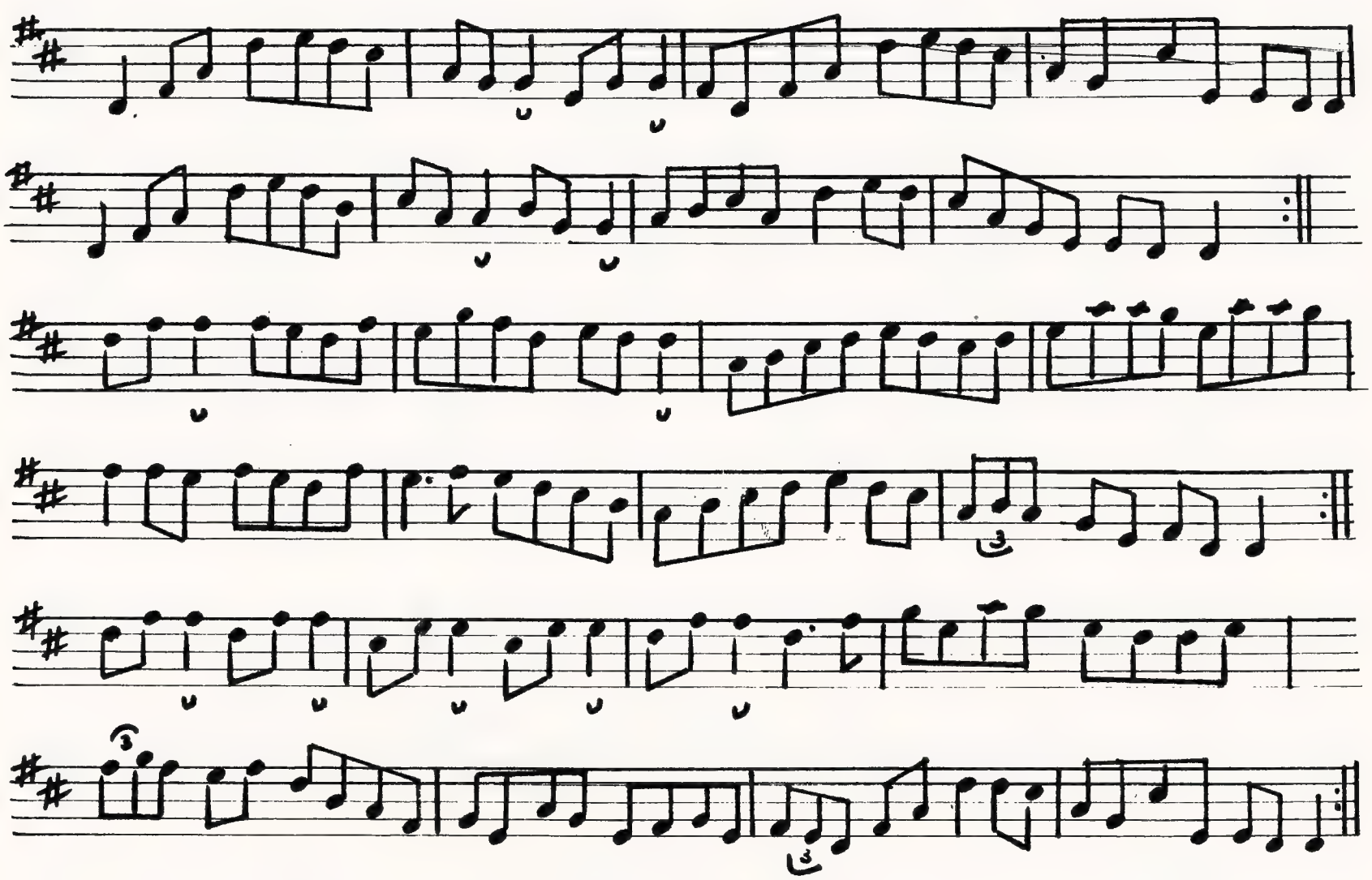
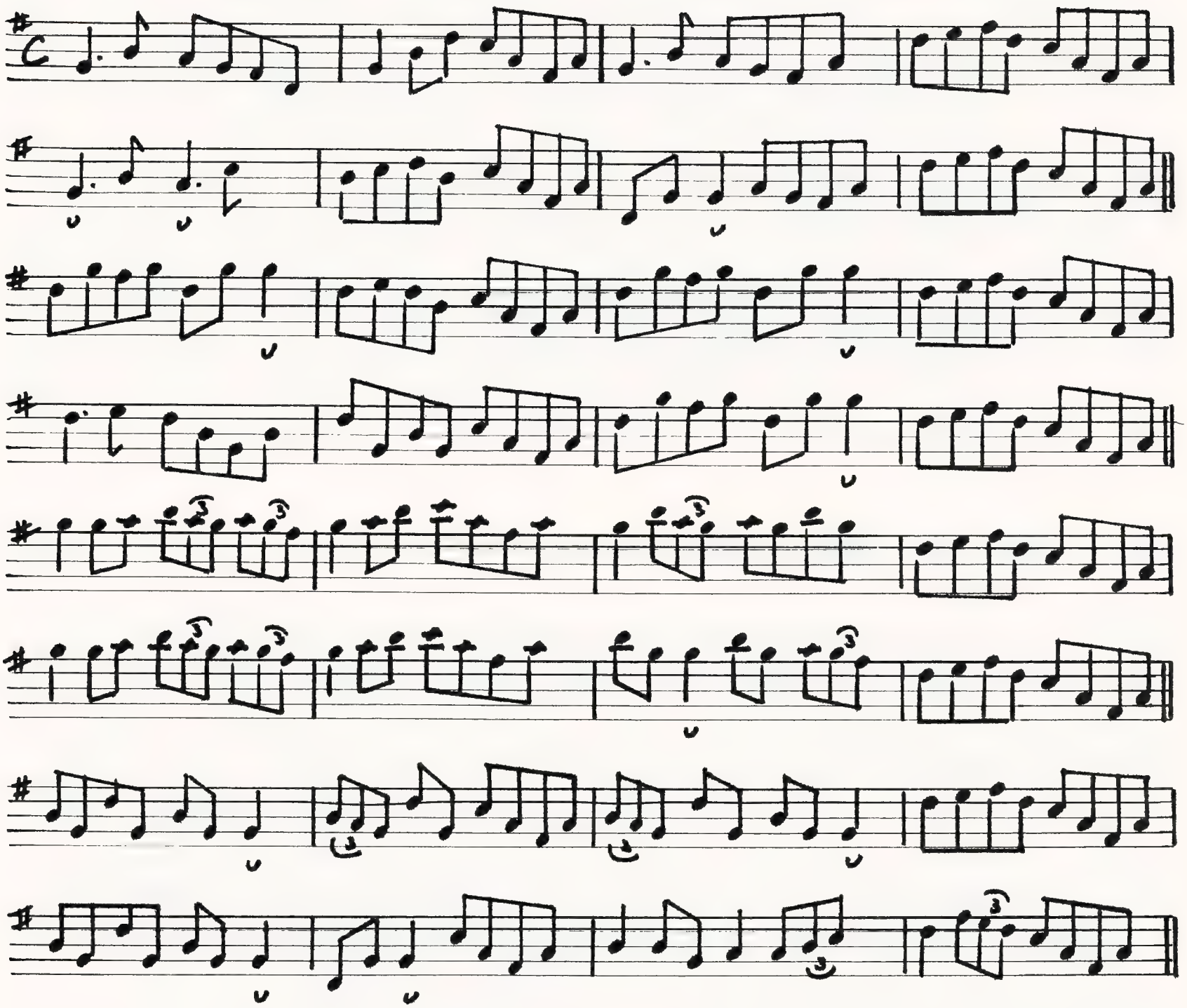
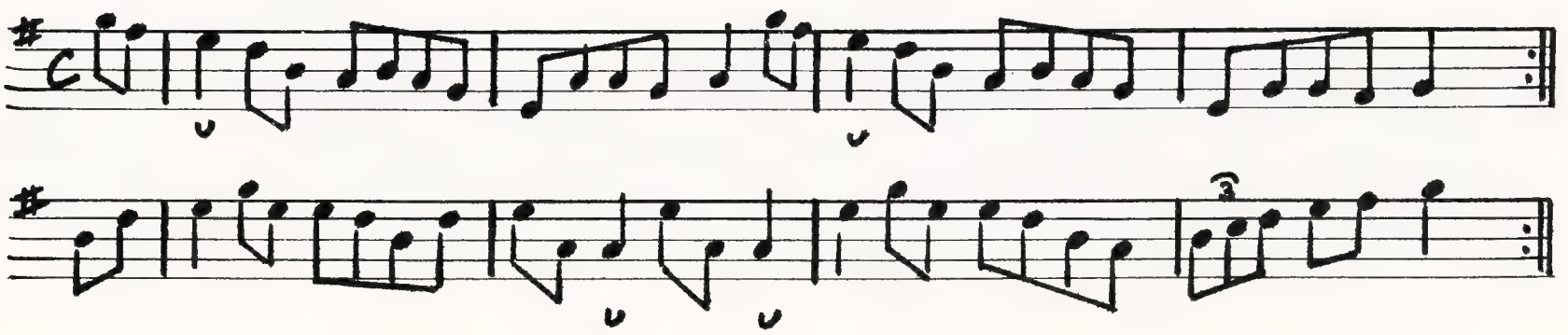
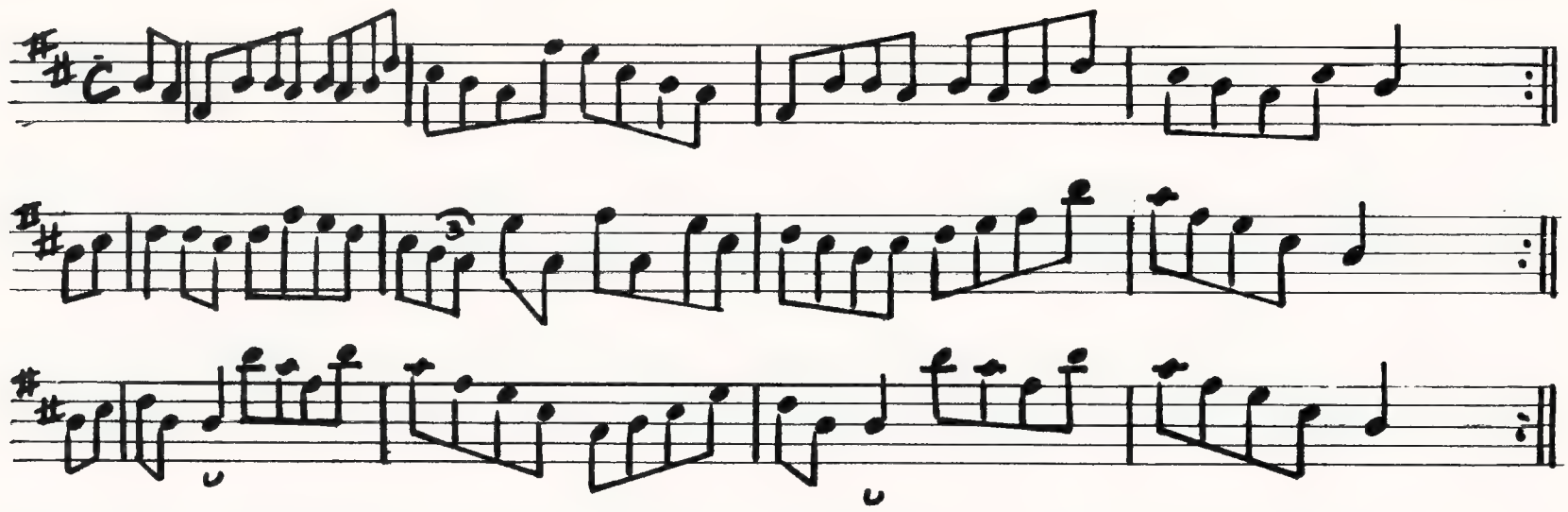
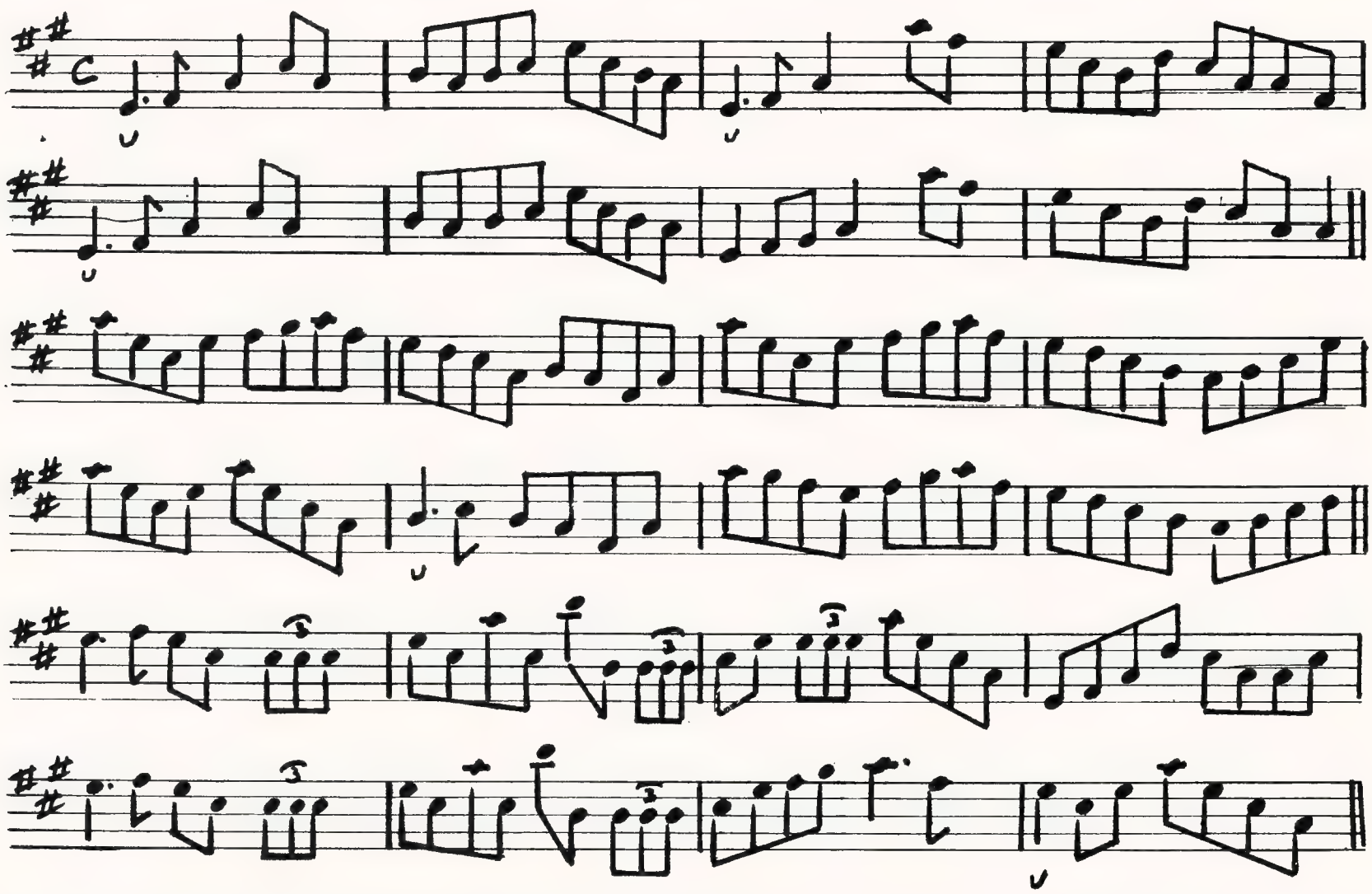
## SLIP JIGS

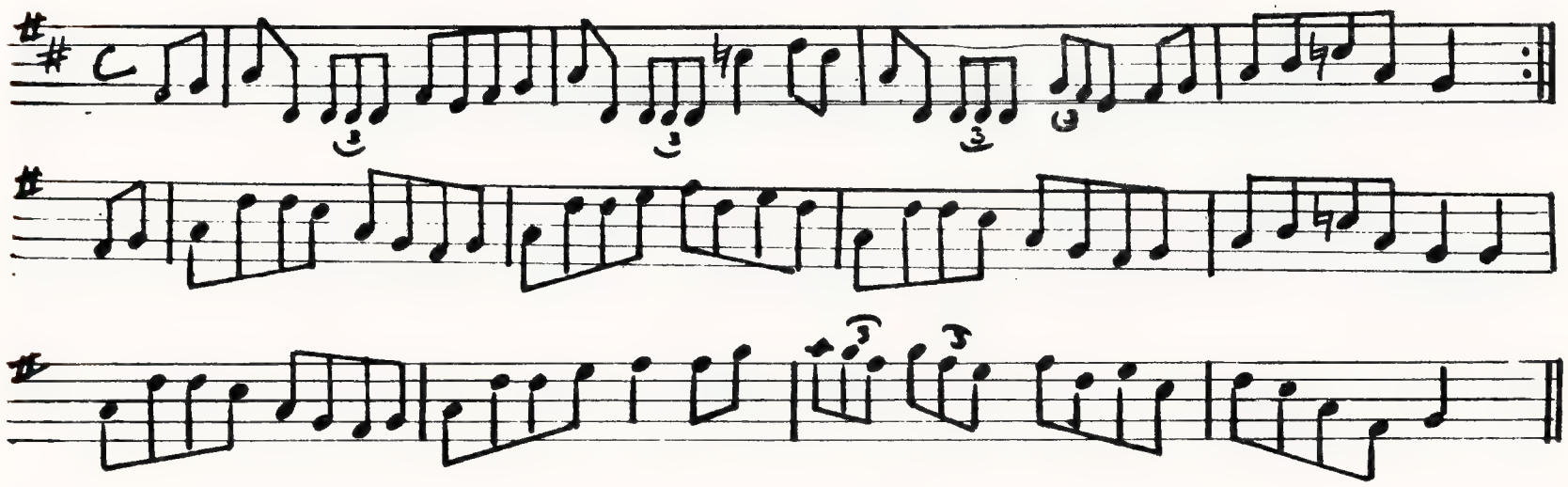
### Humours of Derrykrosane 10

### The Choice Wife 11

## REELS

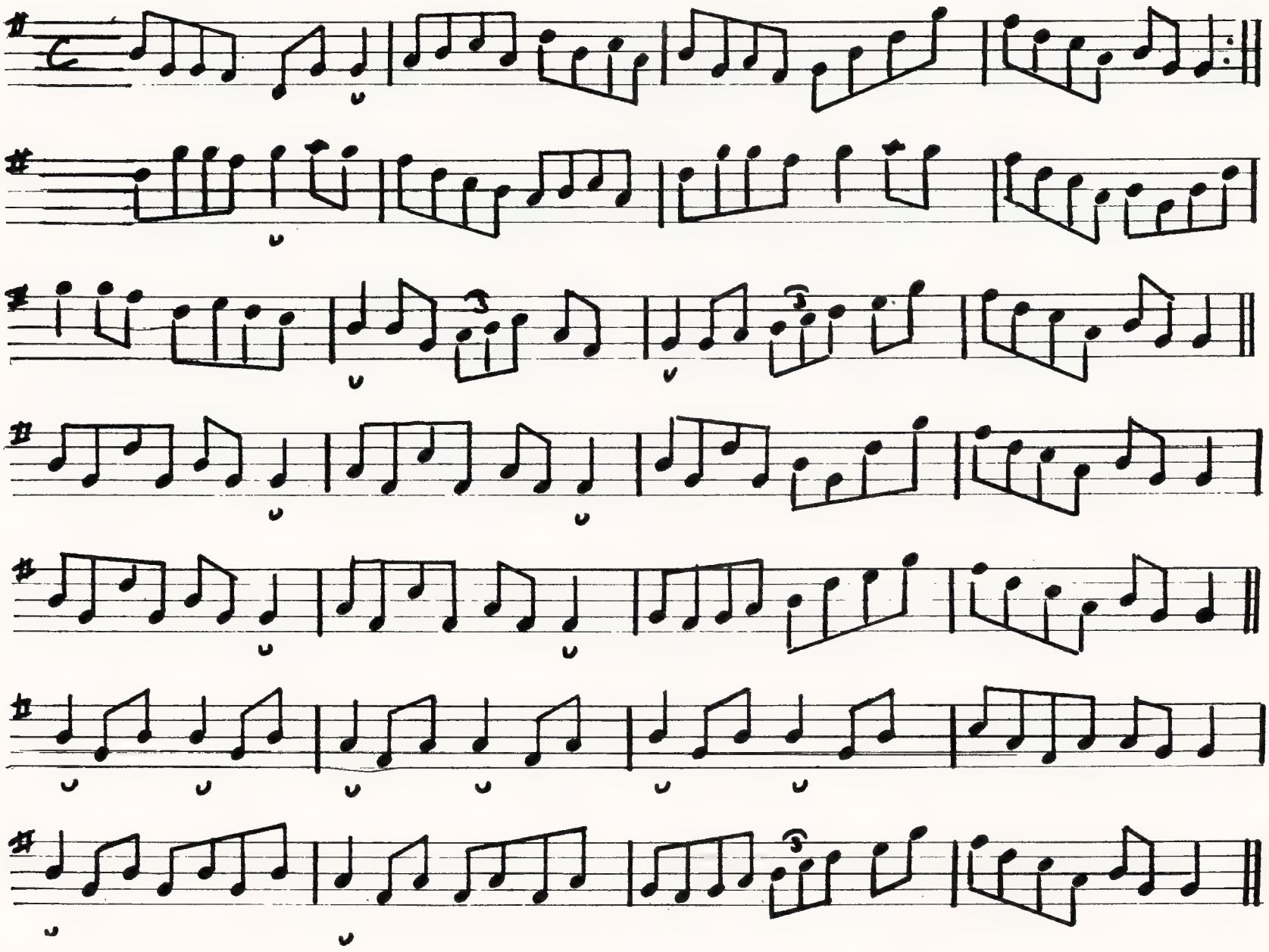
### The Humours of Carrigaholt 12

### Caher Rua 13

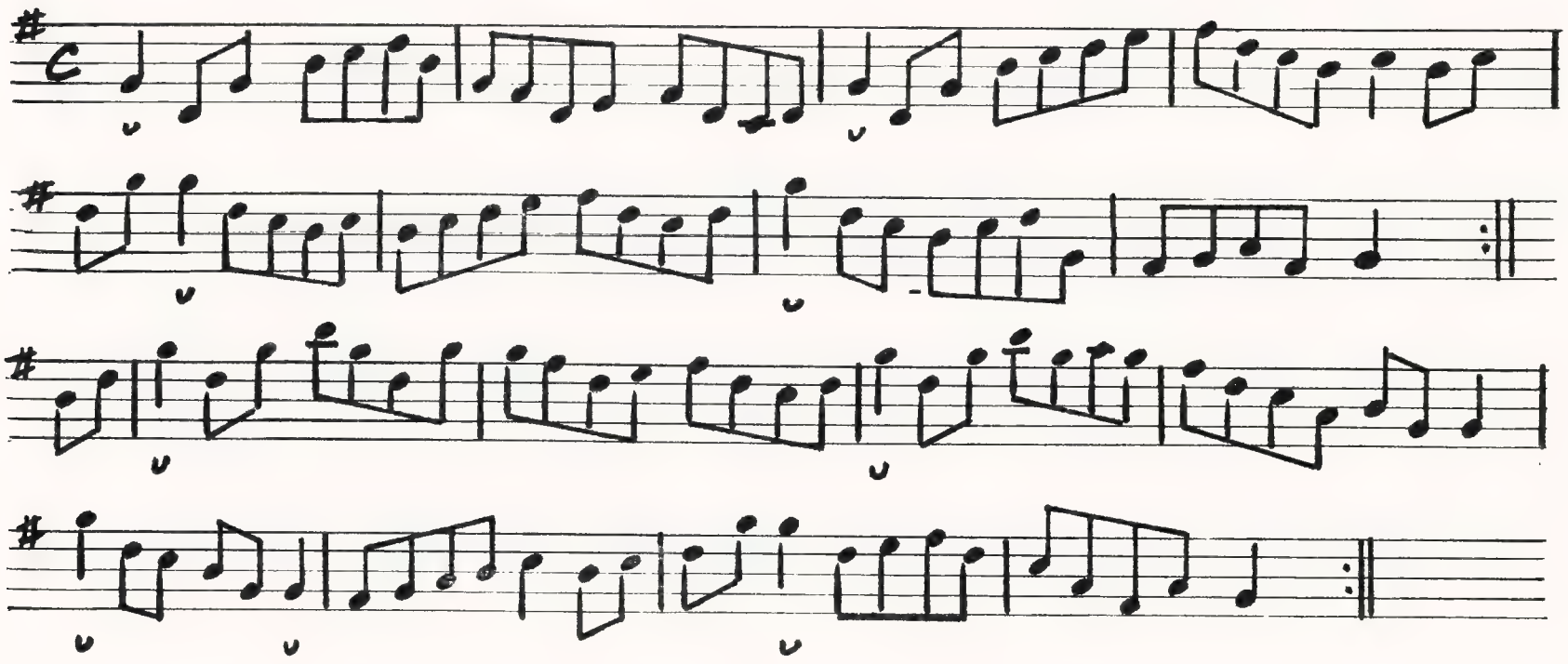


( ✳ - ✳ variation of 1st part. )

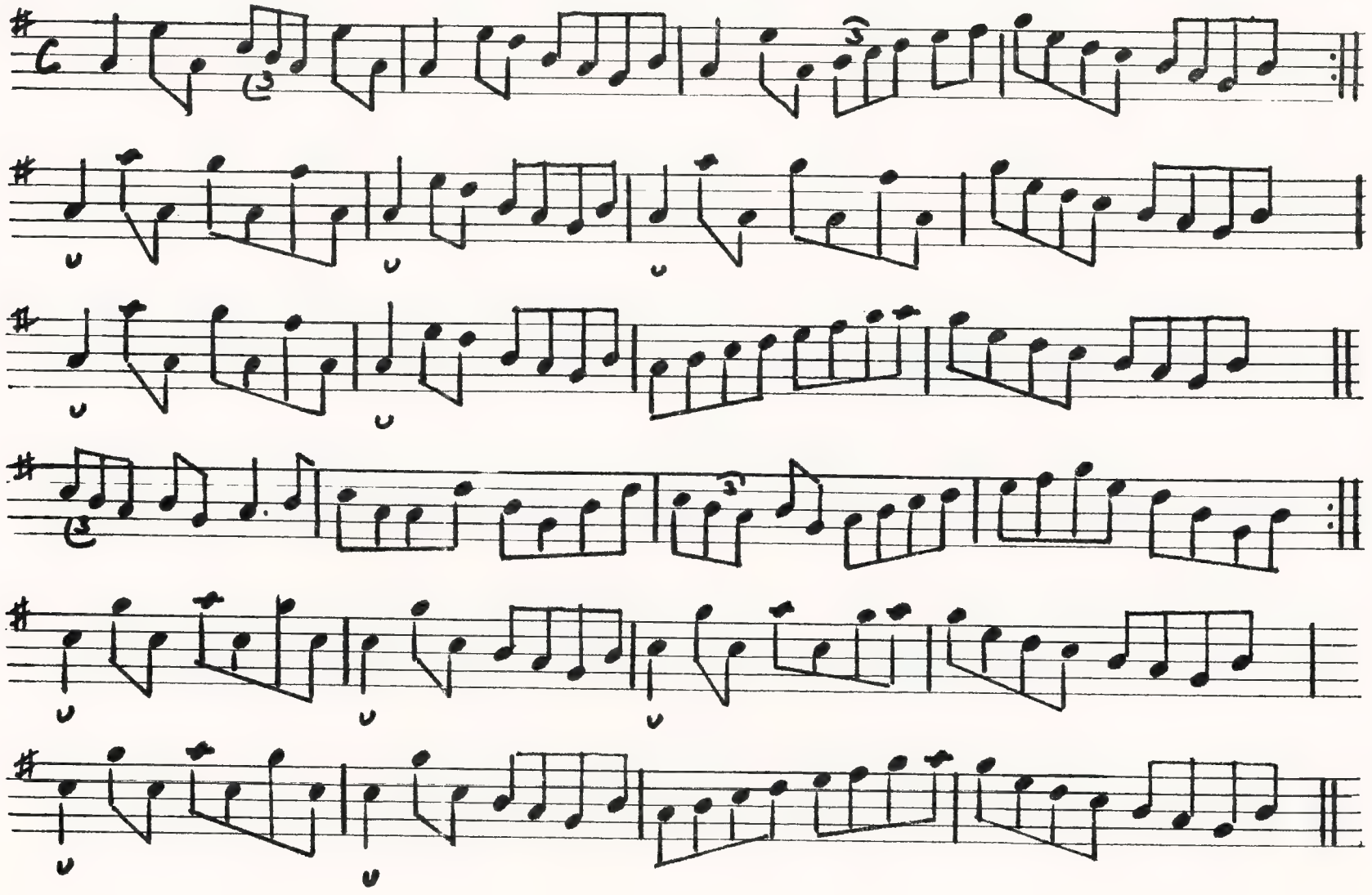
## Speed the Plough 14

## The Boy in the Gap 15

## Trim the Velvet 16

## Dan Breen's Reel 17

## The Musical Priest 18

## Mc Fadden's Handsome Daughter 19

## Within a Mile of Dublin 20



## Colonel Frazer 21

## O'Dowd's Reel

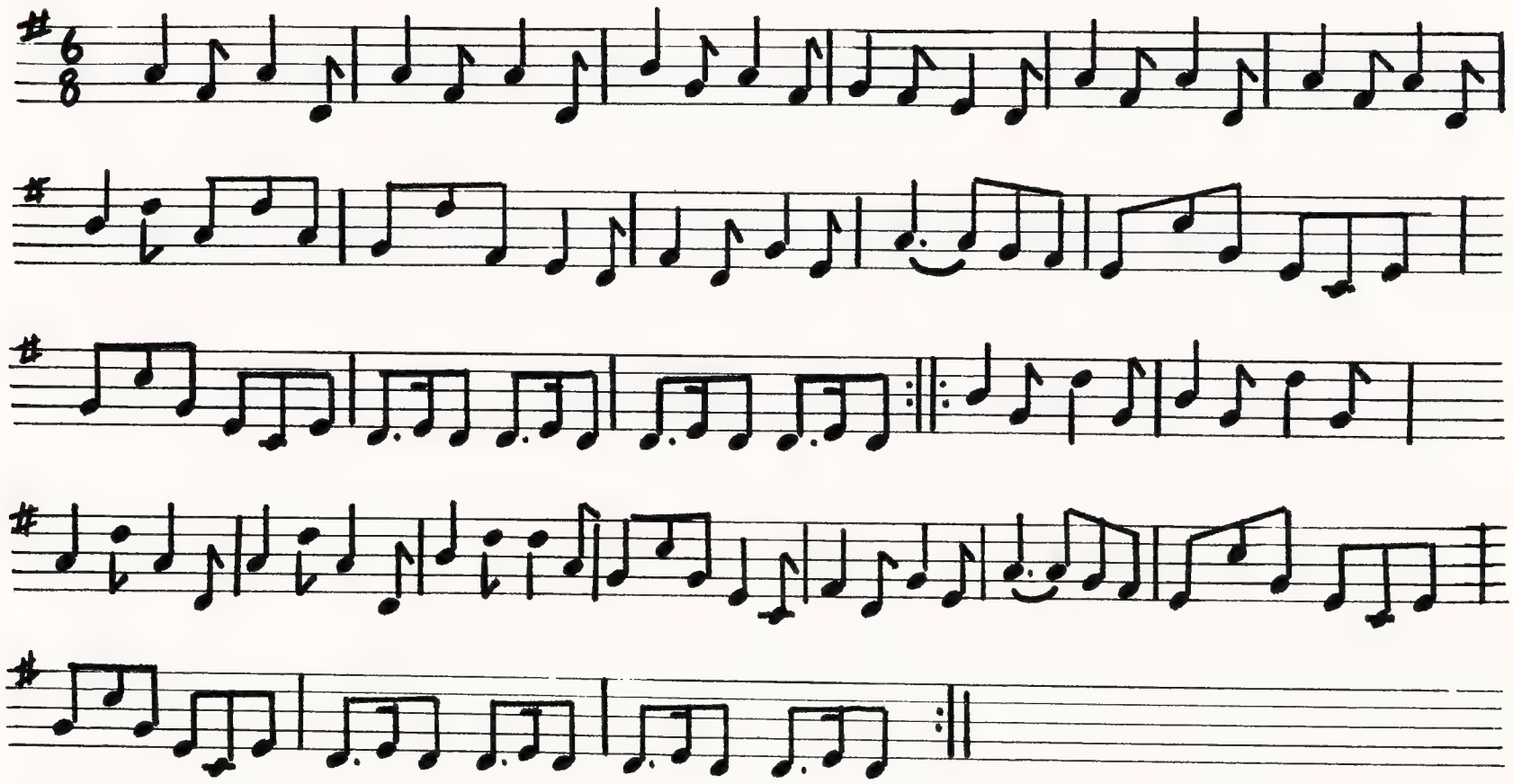
22

## The Gravel Walk

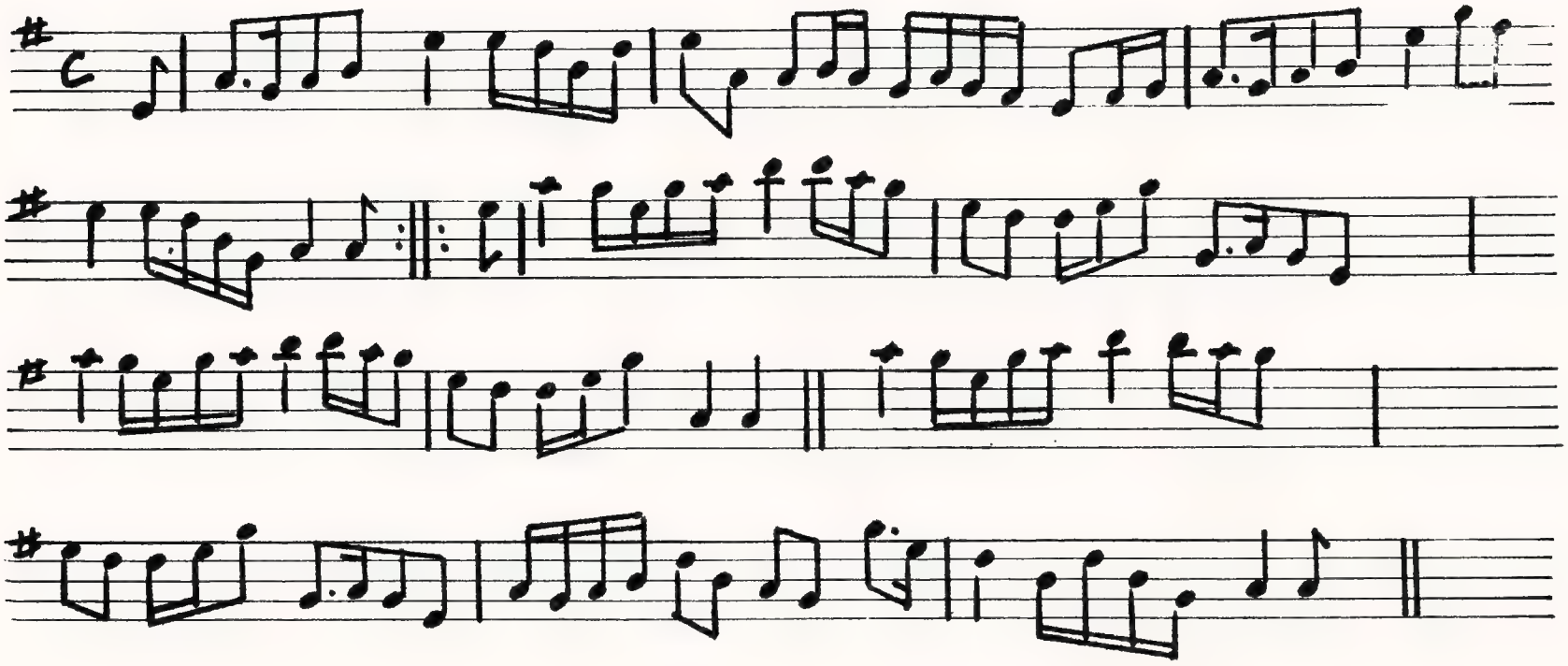
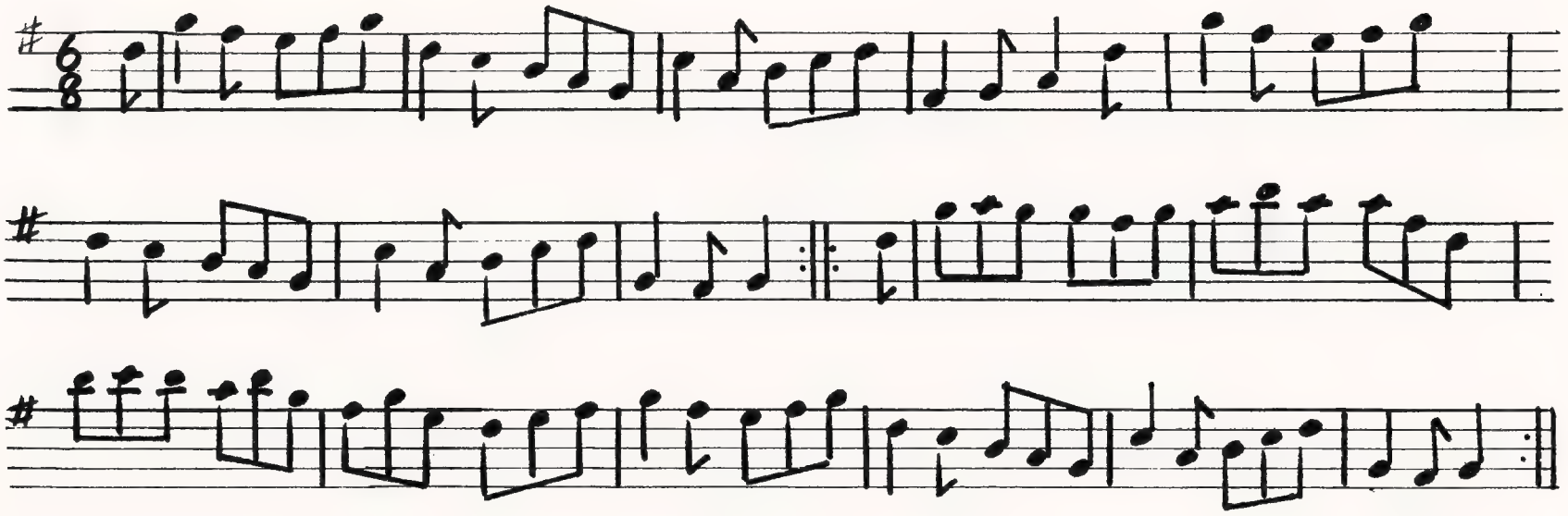
23

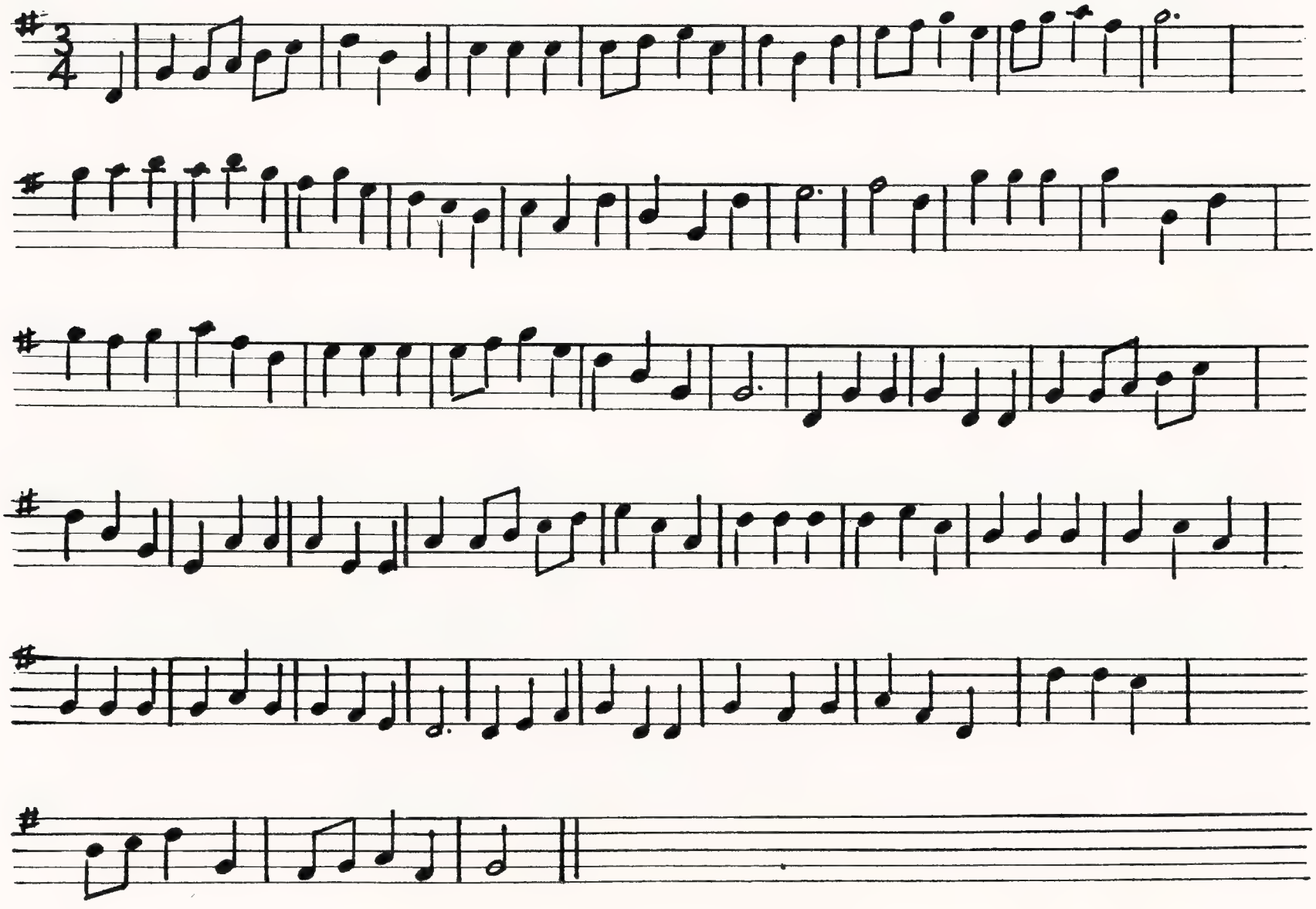


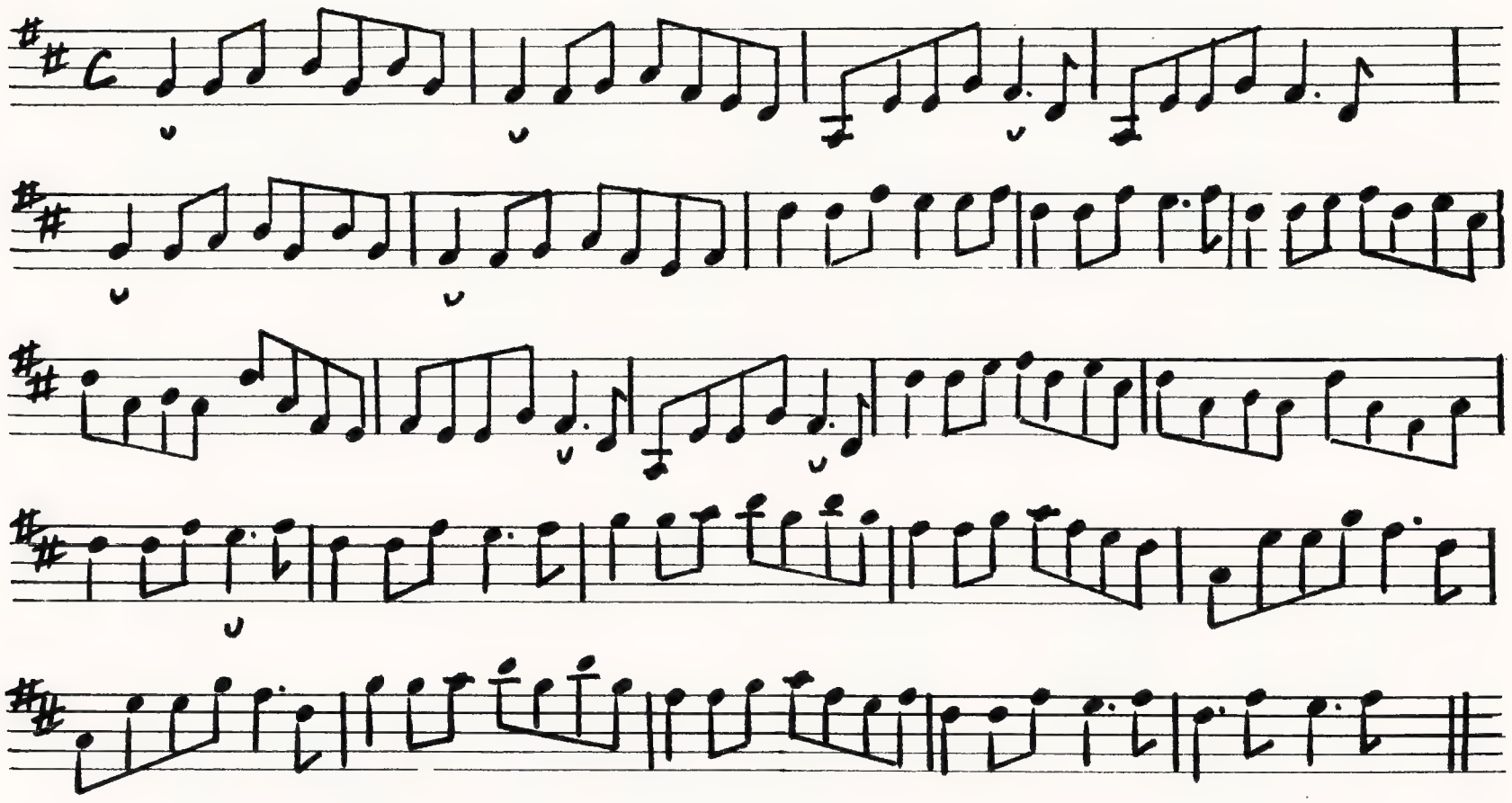
## SET DANCES, CLAN MARCHES & O'CAROLAN TUNES

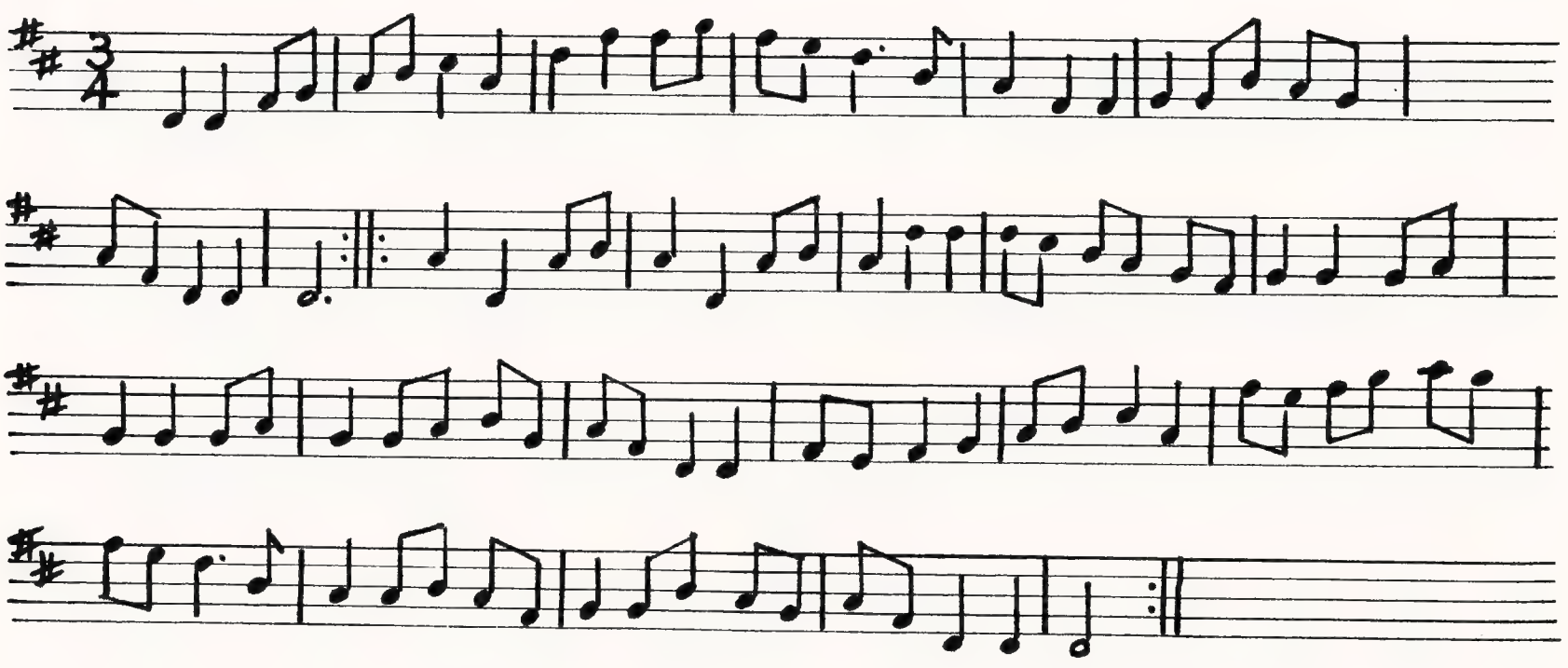
### The King of Laois 24



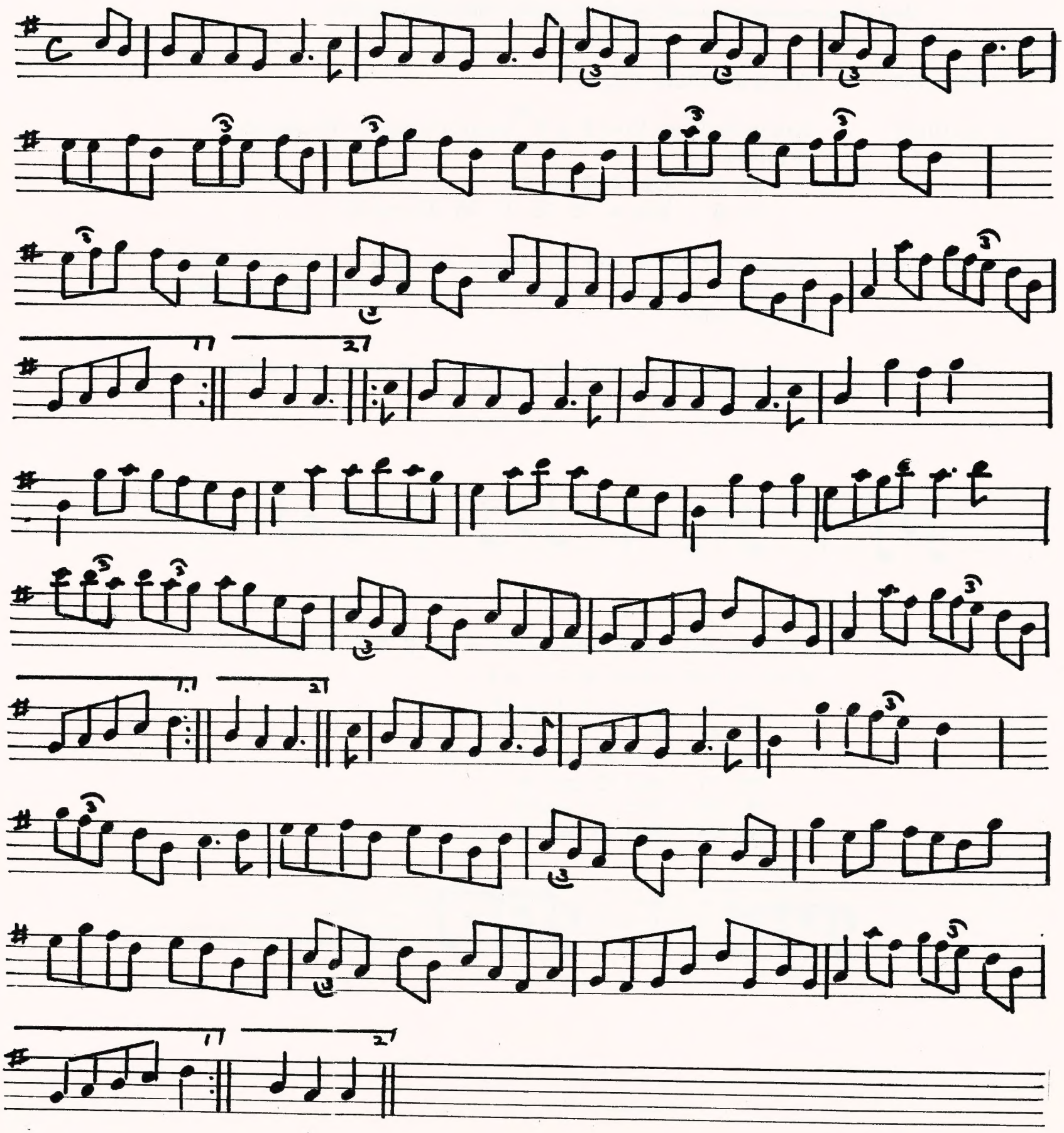
### Lord Mayo 25

**Planxty Irwin** **26**

**O'Rourke's Noble Feast** **27**



## The Eagle's Whistle 28

## Fine Toast to Hewlett 29



## The Ace and Deuce of Piping 30



**Most of the ornamentation used on the tin whistle is derived from piping**

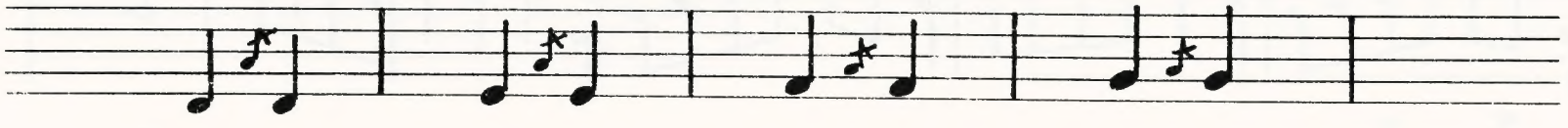
1. ROLLING — This is described in Book 1.

2. SLIDING — Sliding the finger from E to F♯ occurs in many tunes played by pipers, e.g.

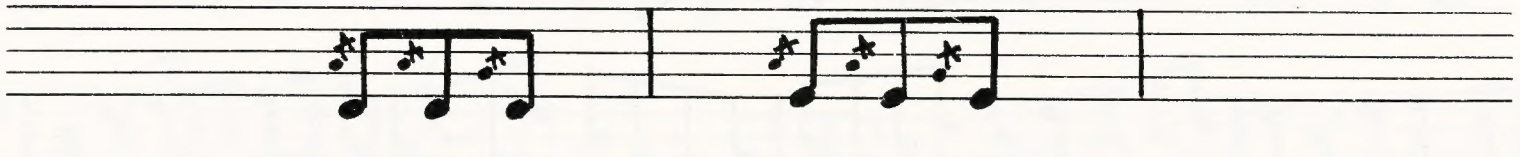
   No. 8 Bars 4, 9 and 13
   No. 9 Bars 4, 15, 25, 27, 28, 29 and 30

3. TONGUING — Making a t-sound with the tongue can give a staccato effect like close fingering on the pipes or can be used to stop certain notes.

4. CUTTING — Cutting means separating groups of identical notes by playing another note quickly between them, e.g.

   No. 8 Bars 1, 3, 4, 7 and 8

5. CRANNING — Cranning is a piping ornamentation on D & E consisting of a group of cuts played quickly, e.g.

   No. 3 Bars 1, 2, 5 and 6
   No. 4 Bars 1, 3 and 5
   No. 9 Bars 41, 42, 45 and 46
   No. 11 Bars 13 and 15
   No. 20 Bars 1, 2 and 3
   No. 24 Bars 13, 14, 25 and 26



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